

South Dakota National Guard

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Engineers lay groundwork for Sturgis High School soccer fields

By Spc. Carl Johnson
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

STURGIS, S.D. – Soldiers from the 260th Engineering Support Company, Montana Army National Guard, and construction engineers from the Danish Army, completed dirt-work for two new soccer fields at Sturgis Brown High School, June 17, as part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise.

The Sturgis community has seen a rise in youth soccer participation and strain on the current soccer fields in the area is high, said Mike Paris, Athletic Director, Sturgis Brown High School. The 260th and Danish Army used their engineering expertise and manpower to provide increased playing space for Sturgis area kids.

“Without the help of the National Guard, the fields would have went from being a two year project to possibly a five year project,” said Paris. “Having more fields will make room for more youth soccer participants.”

The friendly banter between the Americans and the Danes helped to keep things light even under stressful timelines and conditions. They are big soccer fans and were excited to help with this particular project.

“We are creating these European style futbol lanes so the kids can practice,” said Lance Cpl. John Engholm, construction engineer, Danish Army. “Maybe one day the Americans might be able to beat us.”

The Danish Soldiers didn’t just bring a good sense of humor to the project. They provided high caliber engineering and expert machine control as well.

“The Danish Soldiers have been amazing,” said Sgt. First Class Troy Sundheim, non-commissioned officer in charge for the 260th. “They have more experience than we could ever ask for. It’s been a huge help to us.”

Modern warfare requires allied nations to work closely with each other while overseas. Training together before leaving will increase operational success in the future.

“If we train before deployment and train together, we’ll do the job right the first time,” said Engholm.

One of the main factors in getting things done right is job experience.

“Projects like this are a perfect training aid,” said Spc. Dalton Loney of the 260th. “We can get a lot of people into equipment and let them get real world experience.”

Getting time behind the controls of the equipment used in deployment situations was vital for the Soldiers who completed the work on the soccer fields.

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In order to increase the real world aspect of the training, the 260th set up security patrols to protect the Soldiers working on the project from any simulated attacks.

“With this part of the training being designated a combat exercise, it puts the guys on the ground in the position of being on high alert,” said 1st Lt. Hope Kincheloe, commander of the 260th. “Our Soldiers have completed a difficult task and helped the Sturgis community all while maintaining operational security.”

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



160617-Z-FO002-676: Mike Paris, Athletic Director, Sturgis Brown High School, and Lt. Seth Allen of the 260th Engineer Support Company, Montana Army National Guard inspect grade work completed on the high school's new soccer field near Sturgis, S.D., June 17, 2016. The soccer fields will allow the high school team to practice near the school rather than traveling into town. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



160617-Z-FO002-710: Members of the 260th Engineer Support Company, Montana Army National Guard, and construction engineers from the Danish Army work together to check the grade line for proper drainage on Sturgis Brown High School's new soccer fields near Sturgis, S.D., June 17, 2016. The playing fields will alleviate overcrowding on the current set of soccer fields. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



160614-Z-FO002-767: Staff Sgt. Nyle Obergfell of the 260th Engineer Support Company, Montana Army National Guard, and Lance Cpl. John Engholm, construction engineer, Danish Army, discuss the soccer field project at Sturgis Brown High School, near Sturgis, S.D., June 17, 2016. The playing fields will alleviate overcrowding on the current set of soccer fields. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



160614-Z-FO002-848: Sgt. Josh Baird provides security while Spc. Dalton Loney of 260th Engineer Support Company, Montana Army National Guard, removes dirt from the new soccer field area at Sturgis Brown High School near Sturgis, S.D., June 17, 2016. The soccer fields will allow the high school team to practice near the school rather than traveling into town. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



160614-Z-FO002-853: Spc. Joe Erickson of the 260th Engineer Support Company, Montana Army National Guard, levels ground at Sturgis Brown High School's new soccer fields near Sturgis, S.D., June 17, 2016. The soccer fields will allow the high school team to practice near the school rather than traveling into Sturgis. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



160614-Z-FO002-857: A construction engineer from the Danish Army uses an excavator to redistribute material as a part of the dirt-work for Sturgis Brown High School's new soccer fields in Sturgis, S.D., June 17, 2016. The soccer fields will allow the high school team to practice near the school rather than traveling into Sturgis. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)

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